AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A recombinant microorganism prepared by transferring, to a mutant strain of microorganism from which at least one gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose has been deleted or knocked out, a gene encoding a heterologous protein selected from the group consisting of an oxidoreductase, ~~a transferase, a lyase,~~ an isomerase, ~~a ligase/synthetase and a hydrolase, wherein said hydrolase is selected from the group consisting of a cellulase,~~ an α-amylase, and a protease.

2. (Currently Amended) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose is a *Bacillus subtilis* gene *glvR or glvC* ~~or a gene functionally equivalent to the gene~~.

3. (Currently Amended) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the microorganism is [[is]] a member of the genus *Bacillus*.

4. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein one or more regions selected from among a transcription initiation regulatory region, a translation initiation regulatory region, and a secretion signal region is ligated to an upstream region of said gene encoding a heterologous protein.

5. (Original) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 4, wherein the one or more regions are three regions constituted by a transcription initiation regulatory region, a translation initiation regulatory region, and a secretion signal region.

6. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 5, wherein the secretion signal region is derived from a cellulase gene of a bacterium belonging to the genus *Bacillus* and the transcription initiation regulatory region and the translation initiation regulatory region are each derived from a 0.6 to 1 kb region upstream of the cellulase gene.

7. (Currently Amended) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 5, wherein the three regions constituted by the transcription initiation regulatory region, the translation initiation regulatory region, and the secretion signal region are a nucleotide sequence of base numbers 1 to 659 of a cellulase gene of SEQ ID NO: 1; a nucleotide sequence of base numbers 1 to 696 of a cellulase gene of SEQ ID NO: 3; a DNA fragment having a nucleotide sequence having 70% ~~homology~~ identity with either of these nucleotide sequences~~; or a DNA fragment having a nucleotide sequence lacking a portion of any one of these nucleotide sequences~~.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a protein by employment of a recombinant microorganism as defined in claim 1, comprising culturing said microorganism, collecting said protein in said microorganism, and purifying said protein.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a protein, comprising culturing a recombinant microorganism as defined in claim 1 in a culture medium containing maltose, collecting said protein in said microorganism, and purifying said protein.

10. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose encodes a PTS maltose-specific enzyme IICB.

11. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose encodes a positive regulator for the *glvARC* operon.

12. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the microorganism is *Bacillus subtilis*.

13. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein said heterologous protein is an oxidoreductase.

14. - 15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 1, wherein said heterologous protein is an isomerase.

17. - 19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in ~~claim 18~~ claim 1, wherein said hydrolase is an α-amylase.

21. (Currently Amended) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in ~~claim 18~~ claim 1, wherein said hydrolase is a protease.

22. (Currently Amended) A recombinant microorganism prepared by transferring, to a mutant strain of microorganism from which at least one gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose has been deleted or knocked out, a gene encoding a heterologous protein ~~or polypeptide~~ selected from the group consisting of an oxidoreductase, an isomerase, an α-amylase, and a protease,

wherein three regions constituted by a transcription initiation regulatory region, a translation initiation regulatory region, and a secretion signal region are ligated to an upstream region of the gene encoding the heterologous protein ~~or polypeptide~~,

wherein the secretion signal region is derived from a cellulase gene of a bacterium belonging to the genus *Bacillus* and the transcription initiation regulatory region and the translation initiation regulatory region are each derived from a 0.6 to 1 kb region upstream of the cellulase gene.

23. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a protein ~~or polypeptide~~ by employment of a recombinant microorganism as defined in claim 22, comprising culturing said microorganism, collecting said protein in said microorganism, and purifying said protein.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a protein ~~or polypeptide~~, comprising culturing a recombinant microorganism as defined in claim 22 in a culture medium containing maltose, collecting said protein in said microorganism, and purifying said protein.

25. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 22, wherein the gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose encodes a PTS maltose-specific enzyme IICB.

26. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 22, wherein the gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose encodes a positive regulator for the *glvARC* operon.

27. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 22, wherein the microorganism is *Bacillus subtilis*.

28. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 22, wherein said heterologous protein is an oxidoreductase.

29. - 30. (Canceled)

31. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 22, wherein said heterologous protein is an isomerase.

32. - 34. (Canceled)

35. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 33, wherein said hydrolase is an α-amylase.

36. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 33, wherein said hydrolase is a protease.

37. (Currently Amended) A recombinant microorganism prepared by transferring, to a mutant strain of microorganism from which at least one gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose has been deleted or knocked out, a gene encoding a heterologous protein ~~or polypeptide~~ selected from the group consisting of an oxidoreductase, an isomerase, an α-amylase, and a protease,

wherein three regions constituted by a transcription initiation regulatory region, a translation initiation regulatory region, and a secretion signal region are ligated to an upstream region of the gene encoding the heterologous protein ~~or polypeptide~~,

wherein the three regions constituted by the transcription initiation regulatory region, the translation initiation regulatory region, and the secretion signal region are a nucleotide sequence of base numbers 1 to 659 of a cellulase gene of SEQ ID NO: 1; a nucleotide sequence of base numbers 1 to 696 of a cellulase gene of SEQ ID NO: 3; a DNA fragment having a nucleotide sequence having 70% ~~homology~~ identity with either of these nucleotide sequences~~; or a DNA fragment having a nucleotide sequence lacking a portion of any one of these nucleotide sequences~~.

38. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a protein or polypeptide by employment of a recombinant microorganism as defined in claim 37, comprising culturing said microorganism, collecting said protein in said microorganism, and purifying said protein.

39. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a protein or polypeptide, comprising culturing a recombinant microorganism as defined in claim 37 in a culture medium containing maltose, collecting said protein in said microorganism, and purifying said protein.

40. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 37, wherein the gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose encodes a PTS maltose-specific enzyme IICB.

41. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 37, wherein the gene participating in membrane permeation of maltose encodes a positive regulator for the *glvARC* operon.

42. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 37, wherein the microorganism is *Bacillus subtilis*.

43. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 37, wherein said heterologous protein is an oxidoreductase.

44. - 45. (Canceled)

46. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 37, wherein said heterologous protein is an isomerase.

47. - 49. (Canceled)

50. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 48, wherein said hydrolase is an α-amylase.

51. (Previously Presented) The recombinant microorganism as claimed in claim 48, wherein said hydrolase is a protease.